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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 240-8101

March 25, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director of Health Services and Chief Medical Officer

Cato R. Fiksdal, Director
Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures

SUBJECT: **WATER VENDING MACHINE INSPECTION PROGRAM**

As requested by your Board on a July 16, 2002 motion by Supervisor Antonovich, we have produced a model Water Vending Machine Inspection Program, and estimated its costs. Representatives from both departments met with Supervisor Antonovich's staff and based on those discussions, outlined an inspection program that is subject to several conditions.

The California Department of Health Services, Food and Drug Bureau, has agreed to conditionally delegate the authority to enforce the Health and Safety Code (H&SC) section regulating vended water. This authority in H&SC Section 111145 allows County Health Services (DHS) to have the Water Vending Machine (WVM) operators currently required laboratory analyses submitted to the health officer. However, those analyses consist of semi annual testing for coliform bacteria, done by the vendors laboratory of choice. The currently allowed maximum fee of \$13.32, now paid to the state would be paid to the County.

Our model inspection program would require several significant changes in the authorization, all of which we believe require. We would need authority to do the sample collection, rather than rely on submissions by the WVM operators. We would need expanded authority to allow testing for more than just coliform bacteria, as determined by the Board. A variety of chemicals has been discussed, each one adding incrementally to the cost. We have included those most often mentioned in our model.

Most importantly, the County must be authorized to recover costs adequate to fund the new inspection program. The Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures Department (ACWM) would need funding for collection and analysis of the samples, and adequate infrastructure to manage the program. DHS also needs to fund their review and all necessary follow up inspections, on problem machines.

Ideally a program would be something like the following:

1. The WVM companies would register and pay a fee to the County for each machine.
2. The funds would support a routine inspection of all water vending machines within the County at a frequency determined by the Board, and the required analyses.
3. ACWM staff would collect samples from each machine, and submit them to the Environmental Toxicology Lab, for analysis of chemical compounds and bacteria.
4. ACWM would immediately submit problem results to County DHS, for follow-up. Accumulated routine results would be reported to DHS and the State Department of Health Services, monthly.
5. DHS would have the responsibility for review, follow-up inspections and enforcement, and charge an hourly rate to the owner of the offending machine to cover DHS expenses. Enforcement/corrective action would be according to State law and Board Ordinance where appropriate.
6. DHS would return machines to service only after they were brought into compliance.

THE COSTS:

These costs are based on current lab and labor costs. The lab rates are currently under review.

Transportation

7.8 miles X 2439 locations X \$0.34 = \$6468 + \$4000 depreciation = \$10,468 (\$2.97/machine)

Labor

1 Inspector Aid for each round of samples = \$54,435 / 3522 machines = \$15.46/machine
\$54,435 / 3522 = \$15.46/machine

Total Collection Costs = \$18.43/ machine

Analyses

Coliform bacteria - Colilert	\$12.68
Trihalomethane (TTHM)	\$23.45
Heterotrophic bacteria Plate Count (HPC)	\$ 6.05
Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)	\$ 7.67

Only in water machines labeled APurified@ \$49.85/machine

Total Costs for one round of all Tests and Collection \$68.28/machine

DHS proposes to recover inspection and related costs for noncompliant water vending machines from the WVM companies at the functional hourly rate (currently \$50.50/hour) plus mileage.

If you have any questions or required additional information, please let us know.

TLG:CF:lm
211:007

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisor